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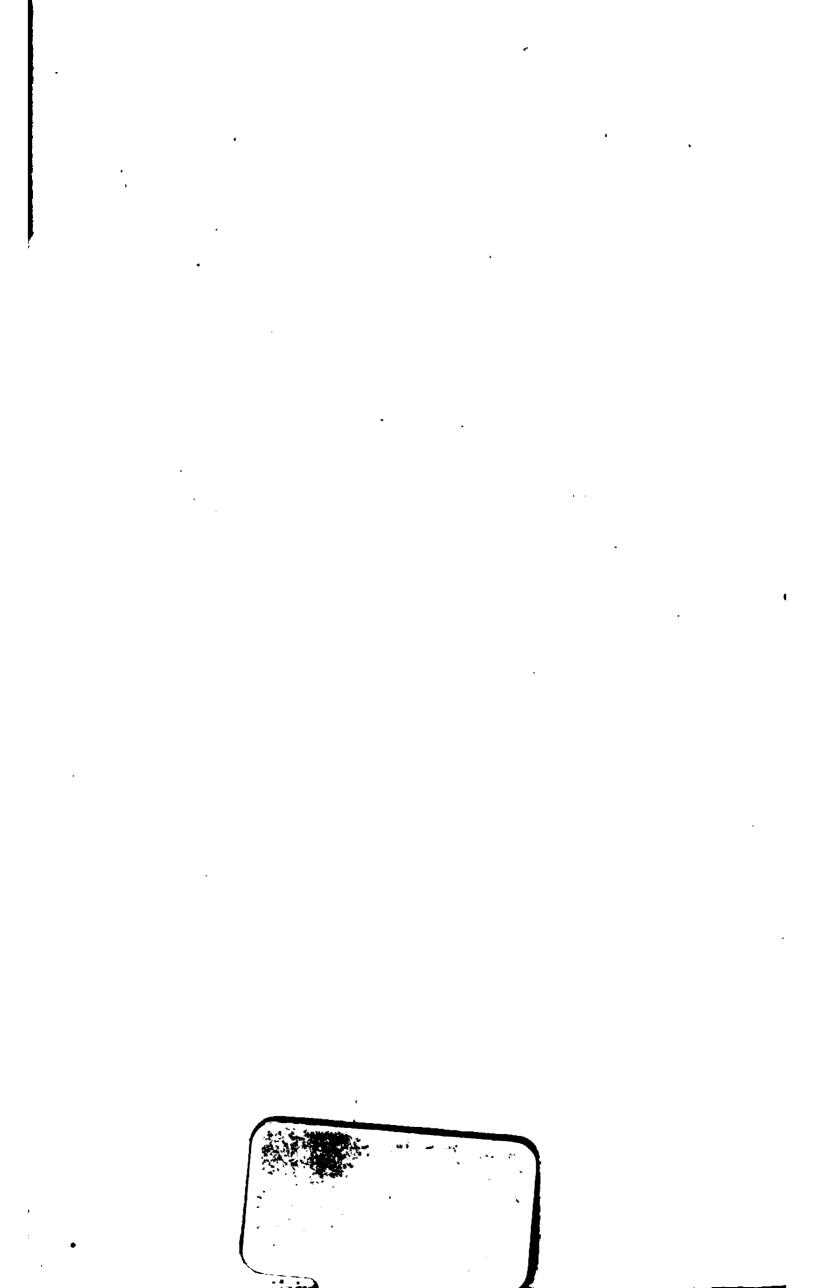
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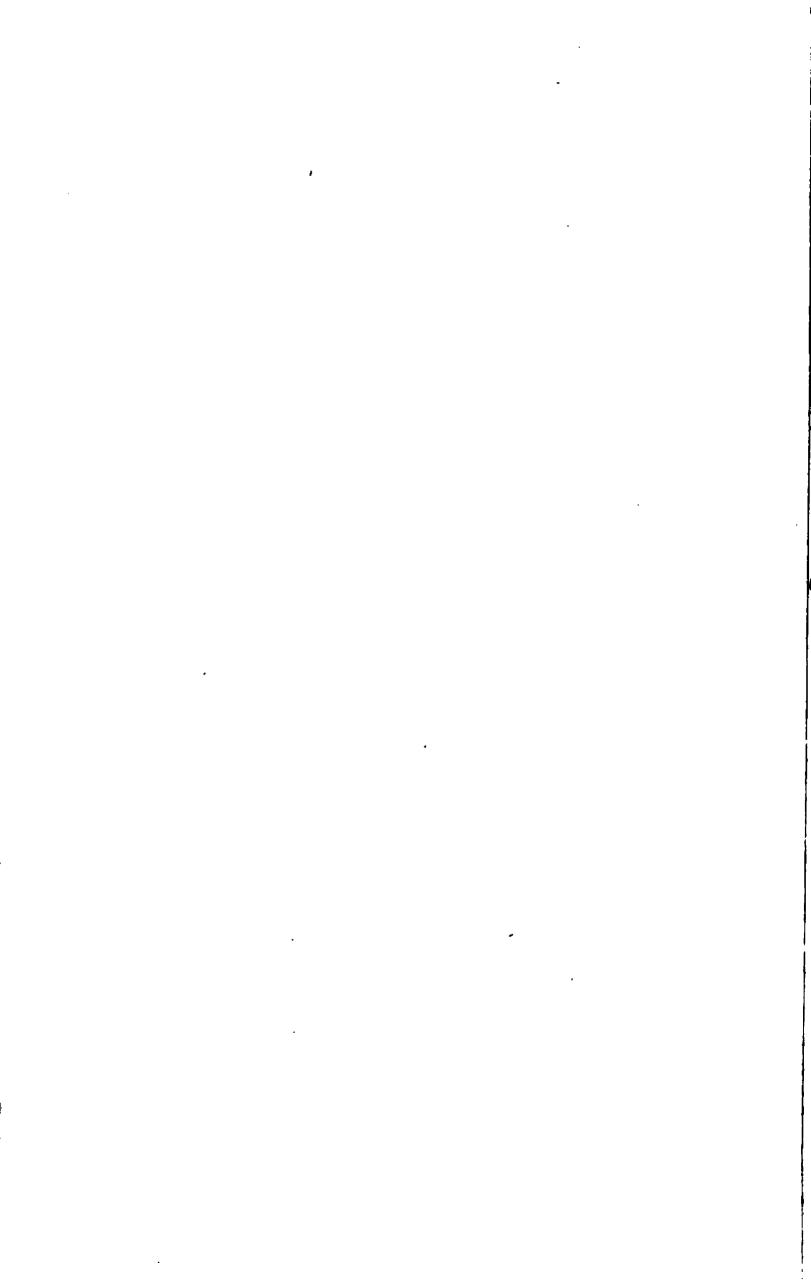
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Mac Flecknoe:

POEM.

By J. DRTDEN.

WITH

Spencer's Gholt:

BEING A

SATYR concerning POETRY.

By 7. 0 L D H A M.

LONDON:

Printed by H. Hills, and Sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1709.

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MAC FLECKNOE.

A LL humane things are subject to decay, And, when Fate summons, Monarchs must obey: This Fleckno found, who, like Augustus, young, Was call'd to Empire, and had govern'd long: In Prose and Verse, was own'd, without dispute, Through all the Realms of Non-sense, absolute. This aged Prince now flourishing in Peace, And blest with iffue of a large increase, Worn out with business, did at length debate To settle the Succession of the State: And pond'ring which of all his Sons was fit To Reign, and wage immortal War with Wit; Cry'd, 'tis resolv'd; for Nature pleads that He Should only rule, who most resembles me: Sb—— alone my perfect Image bears, Mature in Dullness from his tender years. Sb—alone, of all my Sons, is he Who stands confirm'd in full stupidity. The rest to some faint meaning make pretence, But Sb--- never deviates into sense. Some Beams of Wit on other Souls may fall, Strike through and make a lucid intervall; But Sb—'s genuine night admits no ray, His rising Fogs prevail upon the Day: Besides, his goodly Fabrick fills the eye, And seems design'd for thoughtless Majesty: Thoughtless on Monarch Oaks, that shade the Plain, And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
Heywood and Shirley were but Types of thee, Thou last great Prophet of Tautology: Evèn

Even I, a dunce of more renown than they, Was sent before but to prepare thy way; And coursly clad in Norwich Drugget came To teach the Nations in thy greater Name. My warbling Lute, the Lute I whilom strung When to King John of Portugal I sung Was but the Prelude to that glorious Day, When thou on Silver Thames did'st cut thy way, With well-tim'd Oars before the Royal Barge, Swell'd with the Pride of thy Celestial charge; And big with Hymn, Commander of an Host, The like was ne'er in Epson Blankets tost. Methinks I see the new Arion Sail, The Lute still trembling underneath thy nail. At thy well-sharpned Thumb from Shore to Shore The Treble squeaks for fear, the Bases roar: Echoes from Pissing-Ally, Sb ___ call, And Sb—— they resound from A—— Hall. About thy Boat the little Fishes throng, As at the Morning Toast, that Floats along. Sometimes as Prince of thy Harmonious Band, Thou wield'st thy Papers in thy threshing hand. St. Andre's Feet ne'er kept more equal Time, Not even the Feet of thy own Psiche's Rhime: Though they in number as in sense excell; So just, so like tautology they fell, That, pale with Envy, Singleton forswore The Lute and Sword which he in Triumph bore, And vow'd he ne'er wou'd act Villeriss, more. Here stopt the good old Syre; and wept for joy In filent raptures of the hopeful boy. All Arguments, but most his Plays, perswade, That for anointed Dullness he was made.

Close to the Walls which fair Augusta bind, (The fair Augusta much to Fears inclin'd) An ancient Fabrick, rais'd t'inform the sight, There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight:

A Watch-Tower once; but now, so Fate ordains, Of all the Pile an empty Name remains. From its old Ruins Brothel-houses rise, Scenes of lewd Loves, and of polluted Joys. Where their vast Courts the Mother-Strumpets keep, And, undisturb'd by Watch, in silence sleep. Near these a Nursery erects its head, Where Queens are form'd, and future Hero's bred; Where unfledg'd Actors learn to laugh and cry, Where infant Punks their tender Voices try, And little Maximins the Gods defy. Great Fletcher never treads in Buskins here, Nor greater Johnson dares in Socks appear. But gentle Simkin just reception finds Amidst this Monument of vanisht minds: Pure Clinches, the suburbian Muse affords; And Panton waging harmless War with words. Here Fleckno, as a place to Fame well known. Ambitiously design'd his Sb---'s Throne. For ancient Decker prophesi'd long since, That in this Pile shou'd Reign a mighty Prince, Born for a scourge of Wit, and flayle of Sense:
To whom true Dullness shou'd some Psyches owe, But Worlds of Misers from his Pen shou'd flow. Humorists and Hypocrites it shou'd produce, Whole Raymond Families, and Tribes of Bruce. Now Empress Fame had publish'd the Renown, Of Sb—'s Coronation through the Town. Rows'd by report of Fame, the Nations meet, From near Bun-Hill, and distant Watling-street. No Persian Carpets spread th' Imperial way, But scatter'd Limbs of mangled Poets lay: From dusty Shops neglected Authors come, Martyrs of Pies, and Reliques of the Bum. Much Heywood, Shirly, Ogleby there lay, But Loads of Sb almost choak'd the way. Bilk'd Stationers for Yeomen stood prepar'd, -was Captain of the Guard. A_3

The

The hoary Prince in Majesty appear'd; High on a Throne of his own Labours rear'd. At his right hand our young Ascanius sat Rome's other Hope, and Pillar of the State. His Brows thick Fogs, instead of Glories, grace, And lambent Dulnes's play'd around his Face.

Sworn by his Syre a mortal Foe to Rome; So Sb-fwore, nor shou'd his Vow be vain. That he till Death true Dulness wou'd maintain; 'And in his Father's Right, and Realms defence,

Ne'er to have Peace with Wit, nor Truce with Senfe. The King himself the facred Unction made, As King by Office, and as Priest by Trade:

In his sinister hand, instead of Ball,

As Hannibal did to the Altars come,

He plac'd a mighty Mug of potent Ale; Love's Kingdom to his Right he did convey, At once his Scepter and his Rule of Sway;

Whose righteous Lore the Prince had practis'd young,

And from whose Loins recorded Psyche sprung. His Temples last with Poppies were o'erspread,

That nodding seem'd to consecrate his Head: Just at that point of time, if Fame not lye,

On his left hand twelve reverend Owls did fly.

So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tyber's Brook, Presage of Sway from twice six Vultures took.

Th'admiring Throng loud Acclamations make,

And Omens of his future Empire take.

The Syre then shook the Honours of his Head, And from his Brows damps of Oblivion shed Full on the filial Dullness: long he stood,

Repelling from his Breast the raging God; At length burst out in this prophetick mood:

Heavens bless my Son, from Ireland let him reign To farr Barbadoes on the Western Main; Of his Dominion may no End be known,

And greater than his Father's be his Throne.

Beyond

Beyond Love's Kingdom let him stretch his Pen? He paus'd, and all the People cry'd Amen. Then thus, continu'd he, my Son advance Still in new Impudence, new Ignorance. Success let others teach, learn thou from me Pangs without Birth, and fruitless Industry. Let Virtueso's in five years be Writ; Yet not one Thought accuse thy toil of Wit. Let gentle George in Triumph tread the Stage, Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage; Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the Pit; And in their folly shew their Writers wit. Yet still thy Pools shall stand in thy desence, And justify their Author's want of Sense. Let 'em be all by thy own Model made Of Dullness, and desire no Foreign Aid: That they to future Ages may be known, Not Copies drawn, but Issue of thy own. Nay let thy Men of Wit too be the same, All full of Thee, and differing but in Name; But let no Alien S—dl—y interpose To lard with Wit thy hungry Epfor Prose. And when falle Flowers of Rhetorick thou would'st cull, Trust Nature, do not labour to be dull; But write thy best, and top; and in each line, Sir Formal's Oratory will be thine. Sir Formal, though unfought; attends thy Quill, And does thy Northern Dedications fill. Nor let salse Friends seduce thy Mind to Fame, By arrogating Jobnson's hostile Name. Let Father Fleckno fire thy Mind with Praise, And Uncle Ogleby thy Envy raise.
Thou art my Blood, where Johnson has no part; What share have we in Nature or in Art? Where did his Wit on Learning fix a Brand, And rail at Arts he did not understand? Where made he Love in Prince Nicander's Vein; Or swept the Dust in Psyche's humble Strain? Where

Where fold he Bargains, Whip-stitch, kis my Arti Promis'd a Play, and dwindled to a Farce? When did his Muse from Fletcher Scenes purloin, As thou whole Etb'ridge dost transfuse to thine? But so transfus'd as Oyl on Waters flow; His always floats above; thine finks below. This is thy Province, this thy wond rous Way, New Humours to invent for each new Play: This is that boasted Byass of thy Mind, By which one way, to Dullness, 'tis inclin'd. Which makes thy Writings lean on one-side still, And in all Changes that way bends thy Will. Nor let thy Mountain-belly make pretence Of Likenels; things a Tympany of Sense. A Tun of Man in thy large Bulk is writ, But sure thou'rt but a Kilderkin of Wit. Like mine thy gentle Numbers feebly creep, Thy Tragick Muse gives smiles, thy Comick sleep. With whate'er Gall thou sett'st thy self to write, Thy inoffentive Satyrs never bite. In thy fellonious Heart, though Venom lies, It does but touch thy Irsh Pen, and dies. Thy Genius calls thee not to purchase Fame, In keen lambicks, but mild Anagram: Leave writing Plays, and chuse for thy Command Some peaceful Province in Acrostick Land. There thou may it Wings display, and Altars raise, And torture one poor word Ten thousand ways. Or if thou would'st thy diffrent Talents suit, Set thy own Songs, and sing them to thy Lute. He said, but his last Words were scarcely heard, For Bruce and Longvil had a Trap prepar'd, And down they sent the yet declaiming Bard. Sinking he left his Drugget Robe behind, Born upwards by A subterranean Wind. The Mantle fell to the young Prophet's part, With double portion of his Father's Art

The Person of Spencer is brought in, Dissuading the Author from the Study of Poetry; and sbewing bow little it is esteem'd and encourag'd in this present Age.

ONE Night, as I was pondering of late.
On all the Mis'ries of my haples Fate,
Cursing my rhiming Stars, raving in Vain
At all the Pow'rs, which over Poets reign: In came a ghaftly Shape, all pale and thin, As some poor Sinner, who by Priest had been Under a long Lent's Penance, starv'd and whip'd, Or parboil'd Lecher, late from Hot-house crept; Famish'd his Looks appear'd, his Eyes sunk in, Like Morning-Gown about him hung his Skin; A Wreath of Lawrel on his Head he wore, A Book, inscrib'd the Fairy Queen, he bore.

By this I knew him, rose, and bow'd, and said,

Hail reverend Ghost! all hail most sacred Shade

Why this great Visit? why vouchsafd to me,

The meanest of thy Bretish Progeny?

c Com'st thou in my uncall'd, unhallow'd Muse,

Some of thy mighty Spirit to infuse:

If so; lay on thy Hands, ordain me fit

For the high Cure, and Ministry of Wit:

Let me (Ibeg) thy great Instructions claim,

Teach me to tread the glorious Paths of Fame.

Teach me, (for none does better know than thou)

How, like thy felf, I may immortal grow.

Thus

(617) Thus did I speak, and spoke it in a strain; Above my common-rate, and usual vein; As if inspir'd by presence of the Bard, Who with a Frown thus to reply was heard, In style of Satyr, such wherein of old He the fam'd Tale of Mother Hubberd told. I come, fond Ideot, ere it be too late, Kindly to warn thee of thy wretched Fate: Take heed betimes, repent, and learn of me To shun the dang rous Rocks of Poetry: Had I the choice of Flesh and Blood again, To act once more in Life's tumultuous Scene; I'd be a Porter, or a Scavenger, A Groom, or any thing, but Poet here: Hast thou observ'd some Hawker of the Town, Who thro' the Streets with dismal Scream and Tone; Cries Matches, Small-coal, Brooms, Old Shoes and Boots, Socks, Sermons, Ballads, Lies, Gazetts, and Votes? So unrecorded to the Grave I'd go, And nothing but the Register tell, who: Rather that poor unheard-of Wretch I'd be, Than the most glorious Name in Poetry, With all its boasted lummortality: Rather than He, who sung on Phrygia's Shore, The Greeian Bullies fighting for a Whore: Or he of Thebes, whom Fame so much extols For praising Jockies, and New-Market Fools.
So many now, and bad the Scriblers be, 'Tis scandal to be of the Company: The four Disease is so prevailing grown, So much the Fashion of the Court and Town, That scaree a Man well-bred in either's deem'd: But who has kill'd, been often clapt, and oft has rhim'd: The Fools are troubled with a Flux of Brains, And on each Paper squirt their filthy sense: A leash of Sonnets, and a dull Lampoon, Set up an Author, who forthwith is grown - A Man of Parts, of Rhiming, and Renown:

(ii)

Ev'n that vile Wretch, who in lewd Verso each year Describes the Pageants, and my good Lord May'r; Whose Works must serve the next Election-day. For making Squibs, and under Pies to lay, Yet counts himself of the inspired Train, And dares in Thought the facred Name profane.

But is it nought (thou'le say) in Front to stand, With Lawrel crown'd by White, or Loggan's hand?

Is it not great, and glorious to be known,

Mark'd out, and gaz'd at thro' the wond'ring Town,

By all the Rabble passing up and down? So Osts and Bedlee have been pointed at, And every busie Coxcomb of the State:

The meanest Felons who thro' Holborn go, More Eyes and Looks than twenty Poets draw:

If this be all, go have thy posted Name Fix'd up with Bills of Quack, and publick Sham;

To be the stop of gaping Prentices,

And read by reeling Drunkards, when they piss; Or else to be expos'd on trading Stall,

While the bilk'd Owner hires Gazetts to tell,

Mongst Spaniels lost, that Author does not fell. Perhaps, fond Fool, thou footh'st thy self in dream,

With hopes of purchasing a lasting Name:

Thou think'st perhaps thy Trifles shall remain,

Like sacred Cowley, and immortal Ben. But who of all the bold Adventurers,

Who now drive on the trade of Fame in Verse

Can be ensur'd in this unfaithful Sea,

Where there so many lost and shipwrack'd be?

How many Poems writ in ancient time,

Which thy Fore-fathers had in great esteem,

Which in the crowded Shops bore any rate,

And sold like News-Books, and Affairs of State.

Have grown contemptible, and slighted fince,

As Pordage, Fleckno, or the British Prince?

Quarles, Chapman, Haywood, Withers had Applause,

And Wild and Ogilby in former days;

But

12 / But now are damn'd to wrapping Drugs and Wates, And curs'd by all their broken Stationers: And so may'st thou perchance pass up and down. And please a while th' admiring Court and Town. Who after shalt in Duck-lane. Shops be thrown, To mould with Silvester and Shirley there, And truck for Pots of Ale next Steurbridge-Fuir. Then who'll not laugh to see th' immortal Name To vile Mundungue made a Martyr flame? And all thy deathless Monuments of Wit, Wipe Porters Tails, or mount in Paper-Kite? But, grant, thy Poetry should find success, And (which is rare) the fqueamish Criticks please; Admit, it read, and praised, and courted be By this nice Age, and all Posterity; If thou expectest ought but empty Fame; Condemn thy Hopes, and Labours to the Flame: The Rich have now learn'd only to admire, He, who to greater Favours does aspire, Is mercenary thought, and writes to hire: Would'st thou to raise thine, and thy Countries Fame, Chuse some old English Hero for thy Theme, Bold Arthur, or great Edward's greater Son, Or our fifth Harry, matchless in Renown; Make Agincourt, and Creffy Fields outvie The fam'd Lavinian Shores, and Walls of Troy; What Scipio, what Mescenes would'st thou find, What Sidney now to thy great Project kind? Bless me! how great his Genius! how each Line Is big with Sense! how glorious a Design Does thro' the whole, and each proportion shine! How lofty all his Thoughts, and how inspir'd! Pity, such wond'rous Thoughts are not preferr'd: Cries a gay wealthy Sot, who would not bail For bare five Pounds the Author out of Jail, Should he starve there, and rot; who if a Brief Came out the needy Poets to relieve, To the whole Tribe would scarce a Tester give.

But fifty Guineas for a Whore and Clap! The Peer's well-usid, and comes off wond'rous cheap: 'A Poet wou'd be dear, and out o'th' way, Should he expect above a Coachman's pay: For this will any dedicate, and lye, And dawb the gawdy Ass with Flattery? For this will any prostitute his Sence To Coxcombs void of Bounty; as of Brains? Yet such is the hard Fate of Writers now, They're forc'd for Alms to each great Name to bow: Fawn like her Lap-dog, on her tawdry Grace, Commend her Beauty, and bely her Glass, By which the every morning primes her Face: Sneak to his Honor, call him Witty, Brave, And Just, tho' a known Coward, Fool, or Knave, And praise his Lineage, and Nobility, Whose Arms at first came from the Company. Tis so, 'twas ever so, since heretosore The blind old Bard, with Dog and Bell before, Was fain to fing for Bread from door to door. The needy Muses all turn'd Gipsies then, And of the begging Trade e'er since have been: Should mighty Sappho in these days revive, And hope upon her stock of Wit to live; She must to Creswel's trudg to mend her Gains, And let her Tail to hire, as well as Brains. What Poet ever Fin'd for Sheriff? or who By Wit and Sense did ever Lord Mayors grow? My own hard Usage here I need not press, Where you have every day before your face Plenty of fresh resembling Instances: Great Cowley's Muse the same ill Treatment had, Whose Verse shall live for ever to upbraid Th' ungrateful World, that left fuch Worth unpaid. Waller himself may thank Inheritance For what he else had never got by Sense. On Butler who can think without just Rage, The Glory and the Scandal of the Age?

Fair stood his hopes when first he came to Towh? Met every-where with welcome of Renown, Courted, and lov'd by all, with wonder read, And promises of Princely Favour sed:
But what Reward for all had he at last, After a Life in dull expectance passed?
The Wretch at summing up his mis-spent days Found nothing lest, but Poverty and Praise:
Of all his Gains by Verse he could not save Enough to purchase Flannel, and a Grave:
Reduc'd to want, he in due time fell sick, Was sain to die, and be interr'd on tick:
And well might bless the Fever that was sent, To rid him hence, and his worse Fate prevent.

You've seen what Fortune other Poets share; View next the Factors of the Theatre: That constant Mart, which all the year does hold, Where Staple Wit is barter'd, bought, and sold; Here trading Scriblers for their Maintenance, And Livelihood trust to a Lott'ry chance: But who his Parts would in the Service spend, Where all his hopes on vulgar Breath depend? Where every Sot, for paying half a Crown, Has the Prerogative to cry him down? Sidley indeed may be content with Fame, Nor care should an ill judging Audience damn: But Settle, and the rest, that write for Pence, Whose whole Estate's an ounce, or two of Brains, Should a thin House on the third day appear, Must starve, or live in Tatters all the year. And what can we expect that's brave and great, From a poor needy Wretch, that writes to eat? Who the success of the next Play must wait For Lodging, Food, and Cloaths: and whose chief care Is how to spunge for the next Meal, and where?

Hadst thou of old in flourishing Athens liv'd, When all the learned Arts in Glory thriv'd,

When

(15) When mighty Sophocles the Stage did sway, And Poets by the State were held in pay Twere worth thy pains to cultivate thy Mule, And daily wonders then it might produce: But who would now write Hackney to a Stage, That's only thought the Nuisance of the Age? Go after this, and beat thy wretched Brains, And toil to bring in thankless Ideots means: Turn o'er duil Horace, and the Classick Fools, To poach for Sense, and hunt for idle Rules: Be free of Tickets, and the Play-Houses To make some mwdry Actress there thy Prize, And spend thy third Days gains 'twixt her clap'd Thighs. All Trades, and all Professions here abound, And yet Encouragement for all is found: Here a vile Emp'rick, who by Licence kills,

Who every-where helps to increase the Bills, Wears Velver, keeps his Coach, and Whore beside, For what less Villains must to Tyburn ride. There a dull trading Sot, in Wealth o'ergrown By thriving Knavery, can call his own A dozen Mannors; and if Fate still bless, Expects as many Counties to possess. Punks, Panders, Bawds, all their due Pensions gain, And every day the Great Mens Bounty drain: Lavish expence on Wit, has never yet Been tax'd amongst the Grievances of State. The Turky, Guinny, Indian Gainers be, And all but the Poetick Company: Each place of Traffick, Bantam, Smyrna, Zant, Greenland, Virginia, Sevil, Alicant, And France, that sends us Dildoes, Lace, and Wine, Vast profit all, and large Returns bring in:... Parnossus only is that barren Coast, Where the whole Voyage, and Adventure's lost.

Then be advised, the slighted Muse for take, And Cook and Dalton for thy study take:

For Fees each Term sweat in the crowded Hall, And there for Charters, and crack'd Titles bawl: Where M——d thrives, and pockets more each year Than forty Laureats at the Theater. Or else to Orders, and the Church betake. Thy felf, and that thy future Refuge make: There fawn on some proud Patron to engage Th' Advowson of each Punk, and Parsonage: Or footh the Court, and preach up Kingly Right, To gain a Prebend or a Miter by't. In fine, turn Pettifogger, Canonist, Civilian, Pedant, Mountebank, or Priest, Soldier, or Merchant, Fidler, Painter, Fencer, Jack-pudding, Juggler, Player, or Rope-dancer: Preach, Plead, Cure, Fight, Game, Pimp, Beg, Cheat, or Be all but Poet, and there's way to live. [Thieve; But why do I in vain my Counsel spend On one whom there's so little hope to mend? Where I perhaps as fruitlessy exhort, As Lenten Doctors, when they Preach at Court; Not enter'd Punks from Lust they once have try'd, Not Fops, and Women from Conceit, and Pride, Not Bawds from Impudence, Cowards from Fear, Nor seer'd unfeeling Sinners past Despair, Are half so hard, and stubborn to reduce, As a poor Wretch, when once possess'd with Muse. If therefore, what I've said, cannot avail, Nor from the Rhiming Folly thee recal, But spight of all thou wilt be obstinate, And run thy self upon avoidless Fate; May'st thou go on unpitied, till thou be Brought to the Parish-Badg, and Beggary: Till urg'd by Want, like broken Scriblers, thou Turn Poet to a Booth, a Smithfield Show, And write Heroick Verse for Barthol mew. Then flighted by the very Nursery, May'st shou at last be forc'd to starve, like me.

FINIS.

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